

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 578

By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Larry T. McGehee.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Larry T. McGehee; and

WHEREAS, Larry McGehee, former University of Tennessee at Martin chancellor and longtime newspaper columnist, distinguished himself as a man of the greatest ability and integrity who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on May 18, 1936, in Paris, Tennessee, Larry McGehee was the son of the late George Eugene McGehee and Margaret Thomas McGehee; and

WHEREAS, educated in Paris public schools, he went on to become one of the best-educated and most prominent sons Henry County ever produced, holding eight college degrees, including Ph.D.'s from both Yale and Transylvania universities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. McGehee was granted emeritus status when he retired as professor of religion and vice president of the prestigious Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina, after having previously served as executive vice president of the University of Alabama, chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Martin, and special assistant to the president of the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, his weekly newspaper column, *Southern Seen*, celebrated the connection between books and the culture of the South; a collection of his columns was published by The University of Tennessee Press in 2005, at which time his columns appeared in 100 newspapers in eight states; and

WHEREAS, Dr. McGehee receive national attention in May of 1972, when he delivered a two-and-a-half minute, 250-word commencement address to University of Alabama

graduates; *Time* magazine featured the concise and poignant speech in both its domestic and foreign editions; and

WHEREAS, a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Beta Kappa and Kappa Alpha Order, Larry McGehee enjoyed an illustrious 53-year-long career as a teacher; so beloved was he by his students that upon his retirement he was recognized by seventy-four former students who contributed a total of \$50,000 to Wofford College for the Elizabeth Boden and Larry Thomas McGehee Endowed Scholarship Fund; and

WHEREAS, a theologian and an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Larry McGehee was wholly dedicated to his faith, his profession, and his community; and

WHEREAS, Dr. McGehee was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Larry McGehee enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of forty-seven years, Elizabeth Boden McGehee, and he was the proud father of two daughters, Elizabeth Hathorn McGehee, and Margaret Thomas McGehee, who is married to Daniel Paul Parson; and

WHEREAS, Dr. McGehee leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional educator, author, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Dr. Larry T. McGehee, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Larry McGehee.